

## Department of Veterans Affairs

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number of months and days intervening the date the suspension began and the date the reason for suspension ceased to exist. The burden of proof is on the eligible person to establish that suspension of a program was due to conditions beyond his or her control. The period of suspension shall be considered to have ended as of the date of the person's first available opportunity to resume training after the condition which caused it ceased to exist. The following circumstances may be considered as beyond the eligible person's control:

(a) While in active pursuit of a program of education he or she is appointed by the responsible governing body of an established church, officially charged with the selection and designation of missionary representatives, in keeping with its traditional practice, to serve the church in an official missionary capacity and is thereby prevented from pursuit of his or her program of studies.

(b) Immediate family or financial obligations beyond his or her control require the eligible person to take employment, or otherwise preclude pursuit of his or her program.

(c) Unavoidable conditions arising in connection with the eligible person's employment which preclude pursuit of his or her program.

(d) Pursuit of his or her program is precluded because of the eligible person's own illness or illness or death in his or her immediate family.

(e) Active duty, including active duty for training in the Armed Forces.

[41 FR 47929, Nov. 1, 1976]

### § 21.3044 Entitlement.

(a) *Limitations on entitlement.* Each eligible person is entitled to educational assistance not in excess of 45 months, or the equivalent thereof in part-time training. The Department of Veterans Affairs will not authorize an extension of entitlement except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section. The period of entitlement when added to education or training received under any or all of the laws cited in § 21.4020 will not exceed 48 months of full-time educational assistance. The period of entitlement will not be reduced by any period during which employment adjust-

ment allowance was paid after the eligible person completes a period of rehabilitation and reaches a point of employability.

(b) *Continuous pursuit is not required.* The 45-month period of entitlement is any 45 months within the period of eligibility. The eligible person is not required to pursue his or her program for 45 consecutive months.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3511(a))

(c) *Exceeding the 45 months limitation.* The 45 months limitation may be exceeded only in the following cases:

(1) Where no charge against the entitlement is made based on a course or courses pursued by a spouse or surviving spouse under the special assistance for the educationally disadvantaged program (See § 21.3344(d); or

(2) Where special restorative training authorized under § 21.3300 exceeds 45 months.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3541(b), 3533(b))

[49 FR 48692, Dec. 14, 1984, as amended at 61 FR 26109, May 24, 1996]

### § 21.3045 Entitlement charges.

VA will make charges against an eligible person's entitlement only when required by this section. Charges for institutional training will be based upon the principle that an eligible person who trains full time for 1 day should be charged 1 day of entitlement.

(a) *No entitlement charge for eligible persons receiving tutorial assistance.* VA will make no charge against the entitlement of an eligible person for tutorial assistance received in accordance with § 21.4236.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3492, 3533(b))

(b) *Entitlement charges for elementary and secondary education.*

(1) When an eligible spouse or surviving spouse is pursuing a course leading to a secondary school diploma or an equivalency certificate as described in § 21.3344, there are two sets of circumstances which will always result in VA's making no charge against his or her entitlement. These are as follows:

(i) Either the eligible spouse or surviving spouse completed training during the period beginning on October 1,

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1980, and ending on August 14, 1989, and remained continuously enrolled from October 1, 1980, through the time the spouse or surviving spouse either completed training or August 14, 1989, whichever is earlier; or

(ii) The eligible spouse or surviving spouse completed training before August 15, 1989, and received educational assistance based upon the tuition and fees charged for the course.

(2) When an eligible spouse or surviving spouse is pursuing a course leading to a secondary school diploma or an equivalency certificate as described in § 21.3344, the following circumstances will always result in VA's making a charge against his or her entitlement unless the provisions of paragraph (d) of this section would exempt the spouse or surviving spouse from receiving an entitlement charge.

(i) The spouse or surviving spouse elects to receive dependents' educational assistance at the rate described in § 21.3131(a), and

(ii) Either was not pursuing a course leading to a secondary school diploma or equivalency certificate on October 1, 1980, or has not remained continuously enrolled in such a course since October 1, 1980.

(3) When an eligible person pursues refresher, remedial or deficiency training before August 15, 1989, the following provisions govern the charge against the entitlement.

(i) VA will not make a charge against the entitlement of an eligible spouse or surviving spouse.

(ii) VA will make a charge against the entitlement of an eligible child.

(4) The following provisions apply to an eligible person for training received after August 14, 1989. When he or she is pursuing a course leading to a secondary school diploma or equivalency certificate or refresher, remedial or deficiency training.

(i) VA will make no charge against the entitlement of an eligible person for the first five months of full time pursuit (or its equivalent in part-time pursuit).

(ii) VA will make a charge against the entitlement of an eligible person for pursuit in excess of the pursuit described in paragraph (b)(4)(i) unless the provisions of paragraph (d) of this sec-

tion would exempt the eligible person from receiving an entitlement charge.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3511(a), 3533(a); Pub. L. 100-689, Pub. L. 102-127)(Oct. 10, 1991)

(c) *Other courses for which entitlement will be charged.* Except when the requirements of paragraph (d) of this section are met, VA will make a charge against the period of entitlement—

(1) An eligible person for pursuit of a program of apprenticeship or other on-job training;

(2) A spouse or surviving spouse for pursuit of a correspondence course; or

(3) An eligible person for the pursuit of any course not described in paragraph (a) or (b) of this section.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3534)

(d) *Exemption from entitlement charge.* (1) VA will not make a charge against the entitlement of an eligible person for the pursuit of any course or courses when VA finds that the eligible person—

(i) Had to discontinue pursuit of the course or courses as the result of being ordered, in connection with the Persian Gulf War, to serve on active duty under section 672 (a), (d), or (g), 673, 673b, or 688 of title 10, U.S. Code; and

(ii) Failed to receive credit or training time toward completion of the eligible person's approved educational, professional or vocational objective as a result of having to discontinue, as described in paragraph (d)(1)(i) of this section, his or her course pursuit.

(2) The period for which VA will not make a charge against entitlement shall not exceed the portion of the period of enrollment in the course or courses for which the eligible person failed to receive credit or with respect to which the eligible person lost training time.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3511(a); Pub. L. 102-127)(Oct. 10, 1991)

(e) *Determining entitlement charge.* The provisions of this paragraph apply to all courses except those courses for which VA is not making a charge against the eligible person's entitlement, apprenticeship or other on-job training, correspondence courses, and

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courses offered solely through independent study.

(1) After making any adjustments required by paragraph (e)(3) of this section, VA will make a charge against entitlement—

(i) On the basis of total elapsed time (one day for each day of pursuit) if the eligible person is pursuing the program of education on a full-time basis,

(ii) On the basis of a proportionate rate of elapsed time, if the eligible person is pursuing a program of education on a three-quarter, one-half or less than one-half time basis. For the purpose of this computation, training time which is less than one-half, but more than one-quarter time, will be treated as though it were one-quarter time training.

(2) VA will compute elapsed time from the commencing date of enrollment to date of discontinuance. If the eligible person changes his or her training time after the commencing date of enrollment, VA will—

(i) Divide the enrollment period into separate periods of time during which the eligible person's training time remains constant; and

(ii) Compute the elapsed time separately for each time period.

(3) An eligible person may concurrently enroll in refresher, remedial or deficiency training for which paragraph (b)(3) or (b)(4)(i) of this section requires no charge against entitlement and in a course or courses for which paragraph (b)(2) or (b)(4)(ii) or (c) of this section requires a charge against entitlement. When this occurs, VA will charge entitlement for the concurrent enrollment based only on pursuit of the courses described in paragraph (b)(2) or (b)(4)(ii) or (c) of this section, measured in accordance with §§21.4270 through 21.4275 of this part, as appropriate.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3533(a); Pub. L. 100-689)

(f) *Entitlement charge for pursuit solely by independent study.* For enrollments in terms, quarters, or semesters that begin after June 30, 1993, VA will make charges against the entitlement of an eligible person in the manner prescribed by paragraph (e) of this section, if he or she is pursuing a program of education solely by independent study. For all other enrollments where the el-

igible person is pursuing a program of education solely by independent study, the computation will be made as though the eligible person's training were one-quarter time.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3482(b), 3532(a))

(g) *Entitlement charge for apprenticeship or other on-job training.* The charge against entitlement for pursuit of apprenticeship or other on-job training program shall be 1 month for each month of training assistance allowance paid to the eligible person for the program. If there is a reduction in the eligible person's monthly training assistance allowance due to his or her failure to complete 120 hours of training during the month, VA will combine the portions of those months for which a reduction was made. VA will make no charge against entitlement for the period of combined reductions.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3534, 3687)

(h) *Entitlement charge for correspondence courses.* The charge against entitlement of a spouse or surviving spouse for pursuit of a course exclusively by correspondence will be 1 month for each of the following amounts paid as an educational assistance allowance:

(1) \$588 paid after October 31, 2000, and before October 1, 2001;

(2) \$608 paid after September 30, 2001, and before January 1, 2002; and

(3) \$670 paid after December 31, 2001.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3534(b), 3564, 3686(a)).

(i) *Overpayment cases.* VA will make a charge against entitlement for an overpayment only if the overpayment is discharged in bankruptcy, is waived and is not recovered, or is compromised.

(1) If the overpayment is discharged in bankruptcy or is waived and is not recovered, the charge against entitlement will be at the appropriate rate for the elapsed period covered by the overpayment (exclusive of interest, administrative costs of collection, court costs and marshal fees).

(2) If the overpayment is compromised and the compromise offer is less than the amount of interest, administrative costs of collection, court costs and marshal fees, the charge

against entitlement will be at the appropriate rate for the elapsed period covered by the overpayment (exclusive of interest, administrative costs of collection, court costs and marshal fees).

(3) If the overpayment is compromised and the compromise offer is equal to or greater than the amount of interest, administrative costs of collection, court costs and marshal fees, the charge against entitlement will be determined by—

(i) Subtracting from the sum paid in the compromise offer the amount attributable to interest, administrative costs of collection, court costs and marshal fees,

(ii) Subtracting the remaining amount of the overpayment balance determined in paragraph (i)(3)(i) of this section from the amount of the original overpayment (exclusive of interest, administrative costs of collection, court costs and marshal fees),

(iii) Dividing the result obtained in paragraph (h)(3)(ii) of this section by the amount of the original debt (exclusive of interest, administrative costs of collection, court costs and marshal fees), and

(iv) Multiplying the percentage obtained in paragraph (h)(3)(iii) of this section by the amount of the entitlement otherwise chargeable for the period of the original overpayment.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3471, 3532)

(j) *Interruption to conserve entitlement.* An eligible person may not interrupt a certified period of enrollment for the purpose of conserving entitlement. An educational institution may not certify a period of enrollment for a fractional part of the normal term, quarter or semester, if the eligible person is enrolled for the term, quarter or semester. VA will make a charge against entitlement for the entire period of certified enrollment, if the eligible person is otherwise eligible for benefits, except when benefits are interrupted under any of the following conditions:

(1) Enrollment is actually terminated;

(2) The eligible person cancels his or her enrollment, and does not negotiate an educational benefits check for any part of the certified period of enrollment;

(3) The eligible person interrupts his or her enrollment at the end of any term, quarter, or semester within the certified period of enrollment, and does not negotiate a check for educational benefits for the succeeding term, quarter, or semester;

(4) The eligible person requests interruption or cancellation for any break when a school was closed during a certified period of enrollment, and VA continued payments under an established policy based upon an Executive Order of the President or an emergency situation. Whether the eligible person negotiated a check for educational benefits for the certified period is immaterial.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3511)

(k) *Education loan after otherwise applicable delimiting date—spouse or surviving spouse.* VA will make a charge against the entitlement of a spouse or surviving spouse who receives an education loan pursuant to § 21.4501(c) at the rate of 1 day for each day of entitlement that would have been used had the spouse or surviving spouse been in receipt of educational assistance allowance for the period for which the loan was granted.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3512)

[55 FR 28024, July 9, 1990, as amended at 57 FR 29799, July 7, 1992; 58 FR 26240, May 3, 1993; 61 FR 26109, May 24, 1996; 62 FR 55760, Oct. 28, 1997; 63 FR 67778, Dec. 9, 1998; 66 FR 32227, June 14, 2001; 68 FR 34320, June 9, 2003]

#### § 21.3046 Periods of eligibility; spouses and surviving spouses.

This section states how VA will compute the beginning date, the ending date and the length of a spouse's or surviving spouse's period of eligibility. The period of eligibility of a spouse computed under the provisions of paragraph (a) of this section will be recomputed under the provisions of paragraph (b) of this section if her or his status changes to that of surviving spouse.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3512(b))

(a) *Beginning date of eligibility period—spouses.* (1) If the permanent total rating is effective before December 1, 1968,